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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

KAMINI KANCHANA : THEIR CONQUEST—III

WHEN paper is moistened with oil, it cannot be written upon. So the soul spoiled by the oil of sense-enjoyment is unfit for spiritual devotion. But just as the oiled paper when overlaid with chalk can be written upon, so when the soul is chalked over with *renunciation* it again becomes fit for spiritual progress.

WHEN the mind is free from attachment to sense-objects it goes to God and is fixed on Him. The bound souls become free in this way. That soul is bound which takes the path leading away from God.

THOSE who wish at all to attain God and progress in religious devotion should particularly guard themselves against the snares of lust and wealth. Without this no one can ever attain perfection.

ON being asked how the internal enemies *i. e.* lust, anger, &c., can be vanquished, the Bhagavan said :—

So long as these passions are directed towards the world and its objects they are enemies, but when they are directed towards the Deity they become the best friends of man, for they take him to God.

Last for things worldly must be changed to that for God; the anger which you feel towards your fellow-creatures must be directed towards God for not manifesting Himself to you, and so on with all the other passions. The passions need not, and cannot be eradicated but educated and turned into a different channel.

THE woman who has a king for her lover will not accept the wooing of a street-beggar; so the soul that has found favour in the sight of the Lord, does not want the paltry things of the world.

HE who has once tasted the refined crystallised sugar-candy finds no pleasure in treacle. He who has slept in a palace will not find pleasure in lying down in a dirty hovel; so the soul that has tasted the sweetness of Divine Bliss finds no happiness in the ignoble pleasures of the flesh.

Q. How does a true devotee behave when hard-pressed by temptation?

A. He gets out of it as the stone of a ripe mango squeezed by the hand.

WHAT IS RELIGION

(Concluded from page 87.)

GOD is still established upon His own majestic changeless Self. You and I try to be one with Him, but plant ourselves upon nature, upon the trifles of daily life, on money, on fame, on human love and all these changing forms in nature which make for bondage. When nature shines, upon what depends the shining? Upon God, and not upon the sun nor the moon nor the stars.

Wherever anything shines, whether the light in the sun or in our own consciousness, it is He. He shining, all shines after Him.

Now we have seen that this God is self-evident, impersonal, omniscient, the Knower and Master of nature, the Lord of all. He is behind all worship and it is being done according to Him whether we know it or not. I go one step further. That at which all marvel, that which we call evil is His worship too. This too is a part of freedom. Nay, I will be terrible even, and tell you that when you are doing evil the impulse behind is also that freedom. It may have been misguided and misled but it was there, and there cannot be any life or any impulse unless that freedom be behind it. Freedom breathes in the throb of the universe. Unless there is unity at the universal heart we cannot understand variety. Such is the conception of the Lord in the Upanishads. Sometimes it rises even higher, presenting to us an ideal before which at first we stand aghast,—that we are in essence one with God. He who is the coloring of the wings of the butterfly, and the blossoming of the rose-bud is the power that is in the plant and in the butterfly. He who gives us life is the power within

us. Out of His fire comes life and the direst death is also His power. He whose shadow is death, His shadow is immortality also. Take a still higher conception, see how we are flying like hunted hares from all that is terrible, and like them hiding our heads and thinking we are saved. See how the whole world is flying from everything terrible. Once when I was in Benares, I was passing through a place where there was a large tank of water on one side and a high wall on the other. It was in the grounds where there were many monkeys. The monkeys of Benares are huge brutes and are sometimes surly. They now took it into their heads not to allow me to pass through their street, so they howled and shrieked and clutched at my feet as I passed. As they pressed closer, I began to run, but the faster I ran, the faster came the monkeys and they began to bite at me. It seemed impossible to escape, but just then I met a stranger and he called out to me, "Face the brutes". I turned and faced the monkeys and they fell back and finally fled. That is a lesson for all life,—face the terrible, face it boldly. Like the monkeys, the hardships of life fall back when we cease to flee before them. If we are ever to gain freedom, it must be by conquering nature, never by running away. Cowards never win victories. We have to fight fear and troubles and ignorance, if we expect them to flee before us.

What is death? What are terrors? Do not you see the Lord's face in them? Fly from evil and terror and misery and they will follow you. Face them and they will flee. The whole world worships ease and pleasure

and very few dare to worship that which is painful. To rise above both is the idea of freedom. Unless man passes through this gate he cannot be free. We all have to face these. We strive to worship the Lord, but the body rises between, nature rises between Him and us and blinds our vision. We must learn how to worship and love Him in the thunder-bolt, in shame, in sorrow, in sin. All the world has ever been preaching the God of virtue. I preach a God of virtue, and a God of sin in one. Take Him if you dare,—that is the one way to salvation, then alone will come to us the Truth Ultimate which comes from the idea of oneness. Then will be lost the idea that one is greater than another. The nearer we approach the law of freedom, the more we shall come under the Lord, and troubles will vanish. Then we shall not differentiate the door of hell from the gate of heaven, nor differentiate between men and say, "I am greater than any being in the universe". Until we see nothing in the world but the Lord, the Lord Himself, all these evils will beset us and we shall make all these distinctions; because it is only in the Lord, in the Spirit that we are all one, and until we see God everywhere, this unity will not exist for us.

Two birds of beautiful plumage, inseparable companions, sat upon the same tree, one on the top and one below. The beautiful bird below was eating the fruits of the tree, sweet and bitter, one moment a sweet one and then a bitter. The moment he ate a bitter fruit, he was sorry but after a while he ate another and when it too was bitter he looked up and saw the other bird which ate neither the sweet nor the bitter, but was calm and majestic, immersed in his own glory. And then the poor lower bird forgot and went on eating the sweet and bitter fruits again until at last he ate one that was extremely bitter and then he stopped again

and once more looked up at the glorious bird above. Then he came nearer and nearer to the other bird and when he had come near enough the rays of light shone upon him and enveloped him and he saw he was transformed into the higher bird. He became calm, majestic, free and found that there had been but one bird all the time on the tree. The lower bird was but the reflection of the one above. So we are in reality one with the Lord, but the reflection makes us seem many, as when the one sun reflects in a million dew-drops and seems a million tiny suns. The reflection must vanish if we are to identify ourselves with our real nature which is divine. The universe itself can never be the limit of our satisfaction. That is why the miser has gathered more and more money, that is why the robber robs, the sinner sins, that is why you are learning philosophy. All have one purpose. There is no other purpose in life, save to reach this freedom. Consciously or unconsciously, we are all striving for perfection. Every being must attain to it.

The man who is groping through sin, through misery, the man who is choosing the path through hells will reach it, but it will take time. We cannot save him. Some hard knocks on his head will help him to turn to the Lord. The path of virtue, purity, unselfishness, spirituality becomes known at last and what all are doing unconsciously, we are trying to do consciously. The idea is expressed by St. Paul, "The God that ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." This is the lesson for the whole world to learn. What have these philosophies and theories of nature to do if not to help us to attain to this one goal in life? Let us come to that consciousness of the identity of everything and let man see himself in everything. Let us be no more the worshippers of creeds, or sects with small limited notions

of God, but see Him in everything in the universe. If you are knowers of God you will everywhere find the same worship as in your own heart.

Get rid in the first place, of all these limited ideas and see God in every person,—working through all hands, walking through all feet, and eating through every mouth. In every being He lives, through all minds He thinks, He is self-evident, nearer unto us than ourselves. To know this is religion, is faith, and may it please the Lord to give us this faith. When we shall feel that oneness we shall be immortal. *We are* physically immortal even, one with the universe. So long as there is one that breathes throughout the universe, I live in that one, I am not this limited little being, I am the universal. I am the life of all the sons of the past. I am the soul of Buddha, of Jesus, of Mahomet. I am the soul of all the personal teachers, and I am all the robbers that robbed, and all the murderers that were hanged, I am the universal. Stand up then; this is the highest worship. You are one with the universe. That only is humility, not crawling upon all fours and calling yourself a sinner. That is the highest evolution when this veil of differentiation is torn off. The highest creed is Oneness. I am so-and-so is a limited idea, not true of the real "I." I am the universal, stand upon that and ever worship the highest through the highest form, for God is Spirit and should be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Through lower forms of worship, man's material thoughts rise to spiritual worship and the Universal Infinite One is at last worshipped in and through the spirit. That which is limited is material; the spirit alone is Infinite. God is spirit, is Infinite; man is spirit and therefore infinite, and the Infinite alone can worship the Infinite. We will worship the Infinite; that is the highest spiritual worship. The grandeur of realizing these ideas; how difficult

it is: I theorize, talk, philosophize, and the next moment something comes against me and I unconsciously become angry. I forget there is anything in the universe but this little limited self. I forget to say: "I am the spirit, what is this trifle to me? I am the spirit." I forget it is all myself playing, I forget God, I forget freedom.

Sharp as the blade of a razor, long and difficult and hard to cross, is the way to freedom. The sages have declared this again and again. Yet do not let these weaknesses and failures bind you. The Upanishads have declared: "Awake! Arise! and stop not until the goal is reached." We will then certainly cross the path, sharp as it is like the razor and long and distant and difficult though it be. Man becomes the master of gods and demons. No one is to blame for our miseries but ourselves. Do you think there is only a dark cup of poison if man goes to look for nectar? The nectar is there and is for every man who strives to reach it. The Lord Himself tells us, "Give up all these paths and struggles. Do thou take refuge unto me. I will take thee to the other shore, be not afraid." We hear that from all the Scriptures of the world that come to us. The same voice teaches us to say, "Thy will be done upon the earth as it is in Heaven,"—for, "Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory". It is difficult, all very difficult. I say to myself: "This moment I will take refuge unto Thee O Lord, unto Thy love I will sacrifice all, and on Thine altar I will place all that is good and virtuous. My sins, my sorrows, my actions, good and evil, I will offer unto Thee, do Thou take them and I will never forget." One moment I say, "Thy will be done," and the next moment something comes to try me and I spring up in a rage. The goal of all religions is the same but the language of the teachers differs. The attempt is to kill the

false "I," so that the real "I," the Lord, will reign. "I, the Lord, am a jealous God, thou shalt have no other God but me," say the Hebrew Scriptures. God must be there all alone. We must say, "Not I, but Thou," and then we should give up everything but the Lord. He and He alone should reign. Perhaps we struggle hard and yet the next moment our feet slip, and then we try to stretch out our hands to Mother. We find we cannot stand alone. Life is Infinite, one chapter of which is, "Thy will be done," and unless we realise all the chapters we cannot realize the whole. "Thy will be done,"—every moment the traitor mind rebels against it, yet it must be said, again and again if we are to conquer

the lower self. We cannot serve a traitor and yet be saved. There is salvation for all except the traitor and we stand condemned as traitors, traitors against our own selves, against the majesty of Mother when we refuse to obey the voice of our higher Self. Come what will, we must give our bodies and minds up to the Supreme Will. Well has it been said by the Hindu philosopher, "If man says two times 'Thy will be done', he commits sin." "Thy will be done," what more is needed, why say it twice? What is good is good. No more shall we take it back, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven, for Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory for evermore."

THE TESTIMONY OF PLANT-LIFE

"Minerals grow, plants live and grow, and animals live, and grow, and feel".—*Linnaeus*.

"God sleeps in the stone, breathes in the plant, moves in the animal, and wakes up to consciousness in man." —*Schelling*.

"The Ideal Philosophy scrutinizes every phase of Nature, to find the originating sense, the universal soul, the pure identity: it follows Nature's traits to their common beginning, inverting her process of evolution, working back from infinite variety to the primal unity."—*Edmund C. Stedman*

WHEREVER we go among the woods, hills, and fields, we find a variety of charming and curious plants and flowers. There is scarcely any region so barren as to be without vegetation of some sort, appropriate to its environment. There is, literally, no end to the interesting subjects of inquiry opened up, when we consider the diversified beauty and universal distribution of flowers. In the earlier times of natural history, life was regarded as the exclusive possession of animals; but with the advance of science, plants were included in the category of living beings.

A plant is said to form the first and earliest stage of an organised being—it is the harbinger of the more highly endowed animal, forming a link between inorganic matter and self-conscious existence. A plant is a living organism. According to some, plants are unconscious—a statement with which we cannot agree. For as we shall hope to show later on, they possess a highly developed sensitiveness which almost approaches the animal consciousness.

From whatever point of view we consider these two kingdoms of Nature, we find them blended in so many ways,

and separated from each other by such almost imperceptible gradations, that it is hardly possible to draw a line at which we can declare positively where the one begins and the other ends.

In Asia, several plants are worthy of notice—notably, the plant which possesses a surprising vegetable magnetism—sending a strong magnetic shock through the hand of the person with which it comes in contact. Again, the celebrated pitcher-plant, a native of Madagascar and the East Indies, which so curiously resembles a cylindrical urn, about three or four inches in length, its orifice being covered by a lid, which at certain times opens and shuts. It often contains a clear briny fluid, in which dead insects are found, thereby leading to the conclusion that the plant is of a carnivorous habit. A moving plant, found in India, is remarkable for the motion of its leaves, which become more or less horizontal under the influence of light, and depressed during darkness and cold. Besides the movement of rising and falling, it has also a lateral oscillatory motion, so as to occupy an oblique position, relative to the leaf-stalk. The smaller leaflets also exhibit jerking movements, approaching and retiring from each other, and these motions proceed to a limited extent during darkness. The ways of the *Dionæa*, insectivorous plants, living in North America, are most singular. Their leaves are shaped like a mouse-trap, having a hinge in the centre, and a row of spines round the edge. On the surface a few hairs grow, and directly a small insect alights on the leaf, touching one of the hairs, the two halves of the leaf shut up

instantly and catch it. A glutinous secretion is thrown out, by means of which the leaf imbibes the nutriment contained in the insect. In Europe, we have the still more extraordinary case of the sun-dews and bladder-worts, marshy plants, both insectivorous,—the former, capturing their prey by the attraction of viscons hairs, and the latter—by ingenious contrivances in the shape of tiny traps furnished with collars opening outwards only, which permit diminutive water animals to enter, but prevent them from getting out again. We shall add one more instance, with which we are all more or less familiar, namely, the sensitive plant, which closes its leaves on being touched.

Evolution is a law whose operation is traceable throughout every department of nature, and in the examples cited above, may we not mark the rude beginnings of animal life, at the same time suggesting whether we do not meet with a trace of the first indication of will in the motive-power which precedes the action of the plant?

Such is our conception of the gradual but sure process of evolution which has been going on for ages under varying conditions thwarted but strengthened at every step by many failures. All the apparently divergent systems of nature, are necessary steps through which the evolution from the lowest to the highest must pass, marking as they do the various stages of development. The late Duke of Argyll wrote—"I do not know any truth in revealed religion which is more difficult to grasp than the omnipresence of the Divine mind. But look at Nature, and you will get help. For

in all those ultimate energies upon which every living and every inorganic thing depends, we can trace some mind and intellect: we can see as a matter of fact that there is no part of creation where those energies are not exerting their wonderful and mysterious force."

In India, the theory prevails, that everything in Nature is animated—one consciousness running through all, differing only in degree, not in kind. The consciousness of an animal is not the same as that of man, the consciousness of a plant is not the same as that of a stone—and so on. But everything is animated and surely possesses the

potentialities of the One Life, inherent in it. What is the Universe but a state of the Universal Mind, that subtle all-pervading principle—the Great Eternal Omnipresent Spirit—God—whence it is evolved and where Unity reigns everlastingly.

With the influx of greater light, we shall truly say with Emerson—"The heart that abandons itself to the supreme Mind finds itself related to all its works."

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,

Whose body Nature is, and God the soul,"—*Pope*

ADVAITIN.

WOMAN IN ANCIENT INDIA

(Continued from page 95.)

SAKUNTALA: The heroine of the "Lost Ring". Her story is immortalised in the famous drama of the same name by Kalidas "the Hindu Shakespeare", which inspired such a critic as Goethe to write the following lines:—

"Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms
and the fruits of its decline,
And all by which the soul is charmed, enrapt-
ured, feasted, fed,—

Wouldst thou the earth and heaven itself in
one sole name combine?

Name thee, O Sakuntala, and all at once
is said."

She passed her girlhood in the forest as an ascetic, and was not only versed in the scriptures on ethics and religion, but skilled in the science of the inner Akasha of the heart (२२८ तत्तत्तु) Brahman. In her discourse on the

duties of the Ashramas, the words "The wise men of the Panramic literature knew this", "The Brahmans say so also in the Vedas", &c., make one pause and ponder whether she studied the Sritis, Smritis and the Puranas. (Mahabharata, Adiparva, Chapa. 81-85.)

(32) **UTTARA**: The daughter of the King Virata. She was well educated in the art of music. It is stated that Arjuna taught her to sing and play on musical instruments.

(33) **PRAMILA**: She was the mistress and queen of her own kingdom. She caught—and detained the sacrificial horse of the Pandavas when it was passing through her kingdom. When asked for it, she challenged Arjuna to fight with her and she came out, arrayed in mail, in her chariot well fitted with weapons. Pramilā said to Arjuna, "I have caught your horse, if you wish to take it away give me

battle. I challenge your strength, Arjuna, defend yourself from my weapons." (Jaimini Bharata, Ashvamedhic Parvā, Chap. 21.)

(34) MANDODARI: The *Devī Bhāgavat* (Skanda V, Chap. 17) says that she preferred unmarried life with hard rows, being disgusted with the manifold miseries and imperfections of the world. Her story appears also in the Mahabharata.

(35) BRIDHYA KANYA: She also remained unmarried and led a life of hard devotion.

(36) MADALASA: Mother of the King Alarka. She was devoted to the higher knowledge of Brahman, fortunate in the possession of *Paṭragya*, learned in scriptures dealing with *Dharma* (virtue), *Artha* (necessity), *Kāma* (desire), and *Mōksha* (freedom). It was by her teaching of the path of control (*Nirriti*) that her first three sons gave up the kingdom and lived the life of Sannyasins. Aye, it was the *Mother* who brought her children up in the path of renunciation! When prayed to, at last, by the king, her husband, that if she went on in that way there would be no heir to the kingdom, she trained her fourth son, Alarka, in the path of the world, by teaching him the duties of a king, the threefold work, *Nitya*, *Naimittik* and *Kāmya*, the duties and disciplines of the four *Varnas* (castes), and other acts enjoined by the *Śruti* and the *Smṛiti*. Her story is told at length in the Markandeya Purana. (Chaps. 25-27) from which we make a few quotations below.

To comfort her first-born who was crying, she sang into its ears the following sentiments. "Thou hast no name, pure thou art; the name given to thee is by illusion only. This five-element body of yours is not thine, what then art thou crying for? It is not thou, but the false ego born as a prince with various imaginary qualities, that weeps at these qualities, inhering to the senses, belonging to the elements. These elements again undergo decrease and increase by the action of other elements. Thou hast neither increase,

nor decrease. If the mask of body shrink, don't thou for that be clouded by delusion. This body is produced by good and bad actions only—a mask worn by thyself by the delusion of egoism. Some one is my father, some one my mother, some one is my wife, some one my son, this is mine, this is not mine—such ideas as these make thee think too much of material things. Much deluded are those who think that misery can alleviate misery and enjoyment can produce happiness; much more deluded and ignorant are those who take miseries for happiness. The ear is on the ground, in the ear is the body, in the body again is the *Parusha* seated. They are not identified with the self but the body is. Is not this due to your great ignorance?"

The eldest son, comforted in this way in his childhood, and enlightened in his youth by the teachings of his mother, grew up unattached to the world and took to renunciation without entering the householder's life. The second and the third sons also were brought up in like manner with the same result.

When the fourth child was born, the king while preparing to name it, observed a smile on Madalasa's face, and said, he had named the first three children with the best of his choice. If she thought the names were not appropriate, she might herself choose a fit name for the fourth child if she liked. "According to thy behest", said she, "I would name this fourth son, Alarka, who will be intelligent and virtuous, and will gain name and fame in the world." Then she explained to the king the inconsistency of the names given by him, whilst hers was the one really appropriate which her husband at first doubted.

Madalasa said, "The enlightened know the *Parusha* to be all-pervading, all-penetrating, never going anywhere, residing as the Self in the body, so the name Vikranta—lit., come outside—is incorrect. The name, Subahu,—lit., with good arms, which you gave to your second

son is also unmeaning as the *Parashurama* is without any form. The name Arimardana—lit., the destroyer of enemies,—of the other son, is also to my mind inconsistent, for the reason that when the one Self resides in the bodies of all creatures, how can one be the enemy, or friend of another; matter could be affected by matter, but how could the Formless be affected?"

Then she was compelled by the king to bring up the fourth son in the path of the householder and imparted him such instructions as make an ideal king—whose name becomes immortal—a king who is an ever-loving father to his subjects, staunch friend to the good, dread to his enemies and the wicked, defender of knowledge and religion, and destroyer of ignorance, who is untiring in his duties and perfectly self-controlled,—for he who is subject to his internal foes such as lust, desire, egotism, &c., becomes an easy prey to his outward enemies and conquered by them.

"The king in the administration of his kingdom should imitate the conduct of Indra, Sun, Yama, Moon and Vayu. As Indra (rain-god) satisfies the earth by pouring down rains for four months in the year, so should the king open his purse for the good of his subjects. As for eight months the sun draws water by his rays, so should the king realise taxes from his subjects by wisely devised means. As Yama leads to death his friends and foes alike when their days are numbered, so should the king be impartial in his dealings with the good and the wicked, the beloved and the disliked. As the full moon is pleasing to all so should a king be to his people. As the wind moves in all things without being seen, so should the king keep himself well informed in everything about his subjects, ministers and friends by his clever spies....."

(To be continued.)

VIRAJASANDA.

IS HINDUISM A PERSONAL RELIGION?

PHILOSOPHY is the search after Truth carried on mainly through reason, while religion is the practical conduct followed for the direct realisation of the Truth revealed to the intellect by philosophy. A religion, in order to fulfil its purpose, must rear itself upon the foundation of philosophy, since man cannot long lay his heart on anything that does not receive the full sanction of reason. The Truth of philosophy takes the name of God or Self or Soul in religion, and each form of religion, being in fact the product of its philosophy, bears some evident marks of consanguinity with it. The line of reasoning, native bent of mind &c., of different individuals, varying, various theories have been propounded as to the existence and

nature of the Truth. In India, these different theories are classed mainly under six heads known as the six systems of Hindu Philosophy. In spite of the disagreement between the positions held by these different schools, they are all regarded Hindu, or more correctly orthodox, and the practical methods (or religions) based on them are necessarily orthodox too. A philosophy or religion, in order to be regarded as orthodox, from the Hindu point of view, does not require to postulate a Personal God, far less His incarnations on earth. Acknowledging the authority of the Vedas is a sufficient claim for a philosophy or religion to be classed as orthodox or Hindu. Hence it is that the Sankhya and Purva Mimamsa systems, not-

withstanding their 'atheistic' attitude towards a Personal God are included under Hindu Philosophy,—nay, the Purva Mimamsa forms *the authority* of orthodox Hindus in all ritualistic and sacrificial matters. The different theories promulgated by these systems are represented as having their support in the Vedas. For the Vedas are claimed to be the revelations of Truth—both in its absolute and relative aspects. The Vedas are unapproachable in their greatness because they do not exclude any single element conducive to spirituality, nor set any limit to the development attainable by man.

The Absolute Truth being Infinite cannot be a person—who by the very condition of his existence is limited in time and space. We in our present limited state cannot comprehend Infinity. But if it be at all possible for us to attain to it, we must have to rise to the Impersonal. It is the Vedas which contain, as it were in a mass, all the states of spirituality experienced by man—down from the grossest limitations of the personal up to the infinite perfection of the Impersonal. Each one of the different philosophies and religions of our country presents each one of these spiritual states in a systematic, orderly way; hence they are all orthodox.

Truth being eternal, cannot be said to owe its origin to any particular person or persons. It may be realised and revealed to humanity by some persons. But the realisation of it by the former has very little to do with the personalities of the latter. The fruition of the *Yoga* practices, for instance does not depend upon how much homage the aspirant pays to the personality of Patanjali, but upon the earnestness with which he follows the method discovered by him. Therefore we find in the Upanishads and other scriptures very little account of the lives of the teachers. Sometimes it is only their names that we get and nothing more. Before

Krishna or Chaitanya were born there had been men who were no less Hindus than their worshippers. In the Vedic times, for instance, the Rishis did not worship any personality like Krishna, and yet who will say that they were un-Hindus? We worship Krishna or Chaitanya because they manifested by their words and deeds something that is eternally true. If they only said they were God and did not present themselves as embodiments of certain truths, what their fate would have been, can be easily guessed by all.

There is another point which needs elucidation here. All the worshippers of Krishna or Chaitanya do not worship exactly the same Krishna or Chaitanya. The conception of God of each individual depending upon his mental constitution, it is only natural that the Krishna of one man should be different from that of another. The Krishna of Sanatan Goswami is not the same as the Krishna of an ordinary *Babaji*. None but a Sanatan will know what Sanatan's Krishna was. If God is Infinite it is more reasonable to suppose that with the spiritual growth of the *Sadhak* his conception of God—by whatever name he may call Him—will tend towards Impersonality than towards its opposite. Such a *Sadhak* will be looked upon as a greater Hindu than the ordinary *Babaji* whose Krishna is in no way greater than a common mortal. Does not the Lord Himself say, "He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, his presence I leave not, nor does he leave My presence." (Gita, VI, 30.) Is not this a purely impersonal idea?

This is the peculiar grandeur of Hinduism—its uniqueness—that it does not centre round any particular person or persons. On the other hand the greatness of the personalities connected with it, its Incarnations, consists in the extraordinary manifestation in their lives of the ideals taught by it. Sri

Krishna is the greatest of the Incarnations because He was the embodiment of the Vedanta Philosophy—the highest product of the Vedic genius. Ramchandra was great because He was the embodiment of the ideal ruler. Buddha was great because He was the embodiment of the ideal of compassion,

and so on. Hinduism would not suffer in the least if any of its Incarnations as Krishna or Chaitanya, be proved to have never existed at all. It is therefore that our religion is not associated with the name of any person. It is verily the *Sanatan Dharma* or Religion Eternal.

NOTES ON THOUGHT CONTROL.

II

A MAN left his home and went to Benares to try and get a Guru and learn Yoga. A Yogi took him to discipleship, instructed him in the preliminaries, and directed him to practise. After a few days the man came back to his Guru and said that he had been trying hard all the time but he could not prevent his mind running away from his *Ishtam* every time he sat down and tried to meditate, to a black cow which he had left at home, speak to her, give her food, rub her body and so on and so forth. It was hopeless. The black cow had swallowed up the whole of his mind. The man was thoroughly disgusted with himself and completely dejected. The Guru, on the other hand, who was hearing this with suppressed animation, smiled a smile of joy and encouragement and told him to brace up, his success was sure. He directed him to go to a quiet spot at once and meditate upon the black cow for an hour after which he was to come back to him.

The man rather crest-fallen and vaguely wondering why he should be told to meditate upon the object which he wanted most to expel from his thoughts

went nevertheless, to a quiet spot to carry out his Guru's behest. In a few minutes he was with his cow forgetting the rest of the world going through all the attentions that he used to pay her. The stipulated hour passed away: but his absorption in the cow was growing deeper. After another hour the Guru sent some of his disciples to find out what the newcomer was doing. They went and found him sitting motionless. They called but he replied not. One of them put his hand upon his shoulder and shook him and he opened his eyes with a long 'Oh! Oh!' He said the cow had a vicious habit of butting at one and he was playing with her putting the palms of his hands against her horns. Just then he was pushed from behind, his hands slipped and the horns of the cow were against his chest. That was why he cried out.

The Guru heard this episode with great satisfaction, and directed the disciple to put the black cow in the place of his *Ishtam* for a fortnight. This done, he next directed him to confine his meditation to only the eyes of the cow, in which practice the disciple became

successful without much trouble, and his mind thus becoming perfectly one-pointed, soon reached the consummation of concentration—that of attaining the state where thinker, thinking and thought, all become one.

We have, every one of us, our 'black cow,' our pet thought. We all, by a little practice can fully occupy our mind with it for a short time. The period of such occupation should be increased daily till it extends, say, to an hour. When one is able to absorb the whole of his mind for an hour with the thought of a certain object, forgetting his body and his immediate environment, one should try and confine one's attention to a single part or feature of the object instead of flitting from one part to another. This accomplished, the rest will follow.

A student of thought-control or Yoga should always apply himself to its practice if he wants to be successful. Success will come late if the practice is confined to only a short period in the day or night and the mind is let run wild the rest of the time. If the struggle is carried on continuously the whole of the time one is awake, one can concentrate one's mind with some degree of satisfaction for the little time specially set apart for its practice.

The best way of carrying on the struggle with the mind through the hours of one's duties in the ordinary work-a-day world is to try and do a work at a time keeping the whole mind applied to it during the period of its execution. It is usual with us to work at a thing with the mind hovering about other objects. This should be put a stop to. Let the

mind occupy itself wholly with the work at hand. When that is finished let it do the same with the next. This conduct not only makes the mind a tool in the individual's hand—as it should be, but makes all work the best that could be turned out by him.

A great help to the success of this plan is to strive and keep one thought or repeat a symbolical word or letter constantly in the mind during the whole of the waking state through all work and thought. It should be like a thread running through beads or flowers in a garland. Passing from one bead to another you always fall in upon the thread between.

The mind cannot exist without food. Like an infant it would swallow whatever it could lay its hands upon. So anticipate its unhealthy wanderings by providing it with a feeding bottle. Let the feeding bottle contain such food as will give it immortality. Always present to it the bottle and let it suck of it whenever it wants any food. A few weeks' steady care and attention may probably be enough to give it a taste of the food; once it has perceived the flavour, its desire for other foods will be on the wane. Steady and earnest application then will soon do the rest.

NATURE is ready to give up her secrets if we only know how to knock, to give her the necessary blow, and the strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point, and that is the secret.—*Vivekananda*.

DR. BOSE'S LATEST RESEARCHES

(Condensed from the Electrician.)

DR. J. C. Bose has laid the entire scientific world under an immense debt by his elaborate researches, of far-reaching character, which he has been carrying on during the past few years. His lecture on "The Response of Inorganic Matter to Mechanical and Electrical Stimulus," delivered at the Royal Institution, London, pointed to the existence of a universal action, underlying certain phenomena in both living and inorganic matter. The response of organic matter to stress exerted upon it, to the action of extreme temperature and drugs is well-known. The contraction in length and increase in thickness of a piece of living muscle subjected to stress, and the recovery into its original condition as soon as the stress ceases, frequent stresses producing tetanus and similar phenomena resulting from the action of extreme temperatures and drugs may be accurately indicated by a diagram drawn by mechanism actuated by the muscle itself. In the case of a nerve the response takes the form of an electric current between the injured or excited portion of the nerve and the normal position, instead of, as in muscle a mechanical change of length. The effects of repeated mechanical or electric stimulus, of temperature, of stimulating and other drugs &c., are perfectly similar to those produced in muscle, and curves corresponding in every characteristic with those for muscle

are drawn when a galvanometric record of the response is made.

Experiments with non-living matter, *i. e.*, a wire, also shows that when it is subjected to mechanical stimulus, an electrical response takes place in the form of current between the injured or stimulated end and the normal end of the wire, which is indicated by the movement of the galvanometer needle, the amount of the deflection being definite in relation to the intensity of the stimulus. Its merging into the true state of tetanus under the repeated action of the stimuli with the increase of their frequency; its lethargic condition, precisely analogous to rigour, due to change of temperature in extreme limits; the astonishing increase in the violence of the response—analogue, indeed, to alcoholic intoxication,—due to injection and uniform diffusion of certain drugs through the liquid in the apparatus; while other drugs acting as depressants and still others as poisons; again certain drugs acting as stimulants and depressants according to the proportions administered, the arresting of the "killing" action of the poisons by the timely injection of a fluid antidote;—these marked similarities in the action between two sets of the so-called opposite objects in Nature revealed by the exertions of Dr. Bose, seems to show that he is on the eve of a scientific generalisation of wide-spread and

deep-reaching application. Experimenting with the apparatus which measures and records such responses, Dr. Bose found that response and recovery curves obtainable from it correspond in the closest possible degree with the physiological curves obtained from living nerve and muscle. So close is this agreement that expert physiologists are unable to distinguish between the two sets of curves. Carrying the matter still further, Dr. Bose has investigated the response of inorganic matter to light and other forms of electromagnetic radiation. He exhibited an artificial eye—the essen-

tial embodiment of the physical theory of vision—the interior mechanism of which was such as to enable it to give an electrical response to radiation of every description, whether ordinary light, or Hertzian or Röntgen rays, and which bids fair to revolutionise existing methods of wireless telegraphy and electric signalling. Like all the inventive works of its originator it exhibits, a marvellous delicacy and perfection of workmanship combined with a degree of simplicity in which few inventions can rival those of Dr. Bose.

REVIEWS

THE INFLUENCE OF FEAR IN DISEASE. By *W. H. Holcombe*. Chicago, 1899

Almost every one of us has more or less personal experience of the evil effects of fear—not only when in a diseased state of health, but also when there is no single bodily ailment. Dr. Holcombe proves this fact most satisfactorily by reasoning confirmed by facts and figures. His advice to men attending on the sick is as sound as it is wholesome:

"Raise, as far possible, all thoughts of disease, danger or death. The sick-room should not be darkened and made silent. It should be made cheerful and natural, as if no sickness existed. It should have fresh air and cool water and the fragrance of flowers, instead of the odor of drugs. Hope and not fear should be the presiding genius of the place

The pangs of disease—nay even of death

would be reduced to their minimum if this advice were universally accepted and followed.

The author's remarks on the cause of fear and the means of totally destroying it could be profitably laid to heart by every human being on the face of the globe:

"He who is in bondage to the senses has everything to dread. He alone is free from all apprehensions whose heart and mind are staid upon the living God. He truly sits under his own vine and fig-tree with none to make him afraid."

CONDENSED THOUGHTS ABOUT CHRISTIAN SCIENCE. By the same author. Chicago, 1889*.

We confess we are unable to understand the meaning of this new science. The general principles are in the main, not unsound—in fact, they are echoes of Vedantic truths. But

*Putty Publishing Co., McVicker's Building, Chicago

the principles do not seem to warrant their application in effecting cures of disease. We would have nothing but words of appreciation for the book if it dealt only with metaphysical truths in their purely spiritual bearings. It is the incorporation of the material element into it that has made this science (?) a mass of contradictions. Perfect health, happiness &c., can be ensured, according to Christian science, by denying the existence of matter and its concomitant evils on the one hand, and affirming on the other, that "All is Spirit and all is good,"—on the principle, "As a man thinketh so is he." Complete denial of the existence of matter means, as we understand it, complete denial of everything limited by time, space and causality. In other words, it means *affirmation* of Infinite Existence. Identification with Infinity destroys the root of finite embodied existence or in other words, it leads to perfect liberation. Denying matter only to avoid the unpleasant side of it is no denial of matter at all. What we generally call good, such as health, wealth &c., are as much related to matter as are their opposites. Take the one and you must have to take the other. Reject both, and what remains is Spirit Infinite. As the author himself puts it, "It (the real Self) is Melchizedek, 'without father, without mother, without descent, without beginning of days, or end of years, and made in the likeness of the Son of God.'" From the stand-point of this Self, is not the body itself a disease? For, does it not connect one with a father, a mother, a beginning and an end and all the evils of finite existence? To become one with the true Self, and yet to retain a separate individuality (with perfect health, beauty &c.) is a contradiction in terms. Such a belief comes, we are sorry to point out, from a strong undercurrent of sense-attachment flowing deep below the mere intellectual grasp of Truth.

The principles of Christian Science become

a meaningless absurdity when they are practised with the definite purpose of acquiring healing powers. You profess to deny the existence of matter, disease, death, &c., but according to the well-known fact that the mind unconsciously broods over the *end* when it is engaged in the *means* leading to it, you all the time give a full recognition to them in the deepest recesses of your heart.

It is needless to point out to what a ridiculous extreme the whole thing is carried when through Christian science healing powers are sought to be attained as a means of making money—the crystallised essence of matter.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF GEORGE MACDONALD OR **HELPS**
FOR WEARY SOULS. Compiled by *J. Dewey*,
Chicago*.

This nicely got up little book of 93 pages contains many useful hints on the ways and means of attaining peace. The author keeps continually in view the fundamental conditions of spirituality consisting in love and purity—which reach their consummation in transmuting human nature into the divine. We admire this ideal of practical religion of our author which contrasts itself so strikingly with the current dogmatism of churchianity.

We have received with thanks a copy each of Swami Vivekananda's 'Karma Yoga,' 'Raja Yoga' and 'Hinduism' translated into Gujarati by Mr. Bhagu F. Karbhari, the founder and first editor of the *Prajabandhu* newspaper†. Every able man of our country, who undertakes the translation of Swamiji's works into his vernacular renders a service to his people,—since a very small portion of our countrymen are yet able to read them in the original.

*Purdy Publishing Co., McVicker's Building, Chicago.

†See advertisement on cover.

NEWS AND NOTES

THE total number of men, receiving famine relief throughout India is now 5,31,755.

THE King has issued a proclamation announcing the coronation of himself and his consort in June next.

A Sanskrit College at Durbhanga with highly paid staff will be shortly started by the Maharajah. A sufficient fund has been already set apart for the purpose.

THE Anti-Clerical movement in Spain is growing in violence. Two village churches have been burned near Gijon, and a riot has taken place at Valencia, where a religious procession was attacked and the Archbishop's Palace stoned.

MRS. Bullock Workman, the champion lady mountain climber of the world, relates her many interesting experiences in the June number of the "Ladies Magazine." She made three successive mountaineering records in India, the highest being the Koser Gunge Peak 21,000 ft.

COLONEL Fenn, the Honorary Secretary, has just published his eighth list of contributions, paid in or promised, to Lady Curzon's 'Victoria Memorial Scholarship Fund,' the total of which has now reached the substantial sum of Rs. 3,94,862—13—10.

HIS Majesty the King has been pleased to offer to the Viceroy, as Patron of the Queen Victoria Memorial Fund, a series

of paintings for the Victoria Memorial Hall at Calcutta. These paintings were executed by command of her late Majesty and illustrate the important events in her life and reign.

WE have to record the death of her Highness the Begum of Bhopal G. C. S. I., C. I., which melancholy event took place on the 17th ultimo. She ruled Bhopal with wisdom and uprightness for 33 years. She was distinguished for her liberality and benevolence and she maintained undimmed the royal traditions of her house. The Begum's daughter succeeds to the guddi.

THE University of London proposes to establish a "department of practical Chinese," with the object of teaching that language to officers, commercial men, and others proposing to make a career in China.

Mr. George Brown, late British Consul at Kiu-kiang, will be appointed Director of the department, and will be assisted by native Chinese teachers. The China Association have guaranteed £500 a year for five years towards the cost.

A MEETING of gentlemen having special experience of Indian affairs was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on June 7th, to organise an Indian Famine Union. It was resolved: "That, looking to the sufferings of the Indian masses and the responsibility of the British people for their welfare, it is

desirable to form a National Union on an economic and philanthropic basis, to be called the Indian Famine Union having for its special object the investigation of the causes of Indian famines and to promote possible means of prevention."

Is Hinduism crumbling to naught before the attack of Christianity? Yes, says Bishop Welldon. No, say some observant laymen. Yes, cry other observant laymen. Amongst the latter may be reckoned Dr. James Wells of Glasgow, who, when describing, at a meeting of one of the Scottish Church Assemblies, his recent visit to India, said he noticed that the insurgent Ganges was ceaselessly under-running the sacred buildings on its banks at Benares, and that it would by and by sweep them all away. "That was a true parable of the resistless forces that were now assailing India's idolatries." Dr. Wells evidently goes to his wishes for his facts.—*London Correspondent of the A. B. Patrika.*

TWO women students have done exceptionally well at Cambridge this year. One is the grand-daughter of John Bright, Miss Margaret Clarke, who last year obtained a first class in the Moral Science Tripos, being in the third division, has this year obtained a class 2 in part 2 of that Tripos. The other is Miss A. E. Murray, the step-daughter of Sir Charles Elliot, late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. She has obtained a first class in the Moral Science Tripos. This is her third "First" in three succeeding years, the first two having been gained in the first and second parts respectively, of the History Tripos.

THE oxygen treatment of wounds was demonstrated to be an unqualified success at a recent meeting of the Oxygen Hospital, 2, Fitzroy-square. The Duke of Argyll presided.

Dr. Stoker, the discoverer of the system said he first conceived the idea of the importance of oxygen as a healer in the Zulu war. Natives who were hit promptly went to the tops of mountains and generally recovered. The miraculous cures in South Africa from bullet wounds were due to the oxygenated climate. The record of cures effected by the Hospital is over 90 per cent.

FOLLOWING the recent annual meeting of the Society of Arts, Sir Robert Ball gave an interesting lecture on "The Origin of Stars." Sir Robert remarked that people were too much in the habit of considering the starry heavens as an unchangeable fact, and fondly imagining that they shared their midnight treasures with Homer and Job, whereas probably while a few might be the same, vastly more were different.

The appearance of new stars was due, not to new existence, but to increased heat, which caused visibility—myriads of stars quite invisible to the eye and the telescope, being clearly marked on the more sensitive photographic plate, while myriads more, probably, exist outside the yet-attained scope of even the astronomic camera.

Disappearance, too, merely implied that by radiating off its heat, a star became too cool to be visible, but not that it ceased to exist—the brightness of visibility of a star being temporary, its un luminous existence an indefinite period.

A MAN'S true position on the scale of spiritual evolution can hardly be discerned by the form of religion he professes to follow. The interpretation he puts upon it by his whole consciousness and manifests through his words and deeds, affords us a glimpse into the condition of the life within. The same religious doctrine admits of a thousand different interpretations at the hands of men of different spiritual conditions. A very crude form of religious practice may be turned by some into a most powerful incentive to virtue, while others may degrade the grandest truth ever discovered by man into an efficient means for accomplishing some mean, worldly end. Recognition of this fact tends to make us forbear passing hasty judgment upon the followers of faiths not our own. In other words, it makes us tolerant.

YET a distinction between the different forms of faith on the score of their intrinsic value is not without foundation in truth. Particular religious forms being the external manifestations of particular conceptions of God by individuals who first formulated them, are always limited in their scope. With the evolution of the conception of God the outward forms born of it change. Yet a change of religion is not always the outcome of healthy spiritual growth from within. Such change may be the result of a thousand other causes. The spiritual aspirant should take particular care against impulses which are adverse to devotion to his own faith, unconsciously originating in his lower nature. He who has a real thirst for spirituality, having

always a keen eye to the practical side of religion, knows how much he has to exert to faithfully follow one simple religious truth to its fullest significance. He alone knows, on the other hand, how much he gains by the accomplishment of one such holy purpose in life.

TRUE teachers, by which we mean those who can really help the spiritual unfoldment of others, do not deal in borrowed articles, but give out to the world what is rigidly their own, they give the word-picture of the life they actually live. Nothing foreign can find admission into their constitution. They are perfectly natural. This naturalness is their strength, it is the power that wins. A very simple truth coming from such a man does more good to humanity than a thousand theories of a much more exalted character preached by lip-deep teachers. A genuine teacher must be more or less original.

"WHAT is matter? If it is said that we have found the essence of matter when we have learnt all its properties, so also can we say that Hertz's discoveries have made known to us that more phenomena are summed up in the term electricity than was the case formerly. But if by the essence of a thing is meant more than the sum total of all its observed and observable properties, we can say that physics shall never be able to answer questions concerning the essence of things. Physicists know no more of the essence of electricity than the proverbial man in the street knows of the essence of a stone he holds in his hand," writes Mr. P. Lakshmi Narasu Naidu, B. A., in concluding his paper on "Electrical Waves

and Wireless Telegraphy in the March *Indian Review*.

THE properties in which we find matter clothed are not purely objective. They do not wholly belong to matter. They partake also of the nature of the faculties which perceive them. They are the products of the interaction of matter and the perceiving mind. The property of colour for instance depends just as much upon the action of faculty and sensation as upon that of matter. It is impossible therefore to know the essence of matter on the sense-plane. For so long as the senses are there the world of properties cannot be transcended. The world of Essence lies beyond that of senses and properties, and can be approached only by a retirement from the latter. It is cognisable by the intellect cut asunder from the senses, says the Gita.

IN the Vedanta Panchadasi a story is told of ten people who after crossing a stream took an account of their number to see that no one was lost. But each of them forgetting to include himself in the count saw there were only nine of them, and began to lament and cry for the missing one, till a stranger coming that way and understanding the situation disillusioned them by pointing out that in every count the reckoner was the tenth.

As in the above story, the finding in himself of the tenth by each of the reckoners is a mere figure of speech, he having all the time been the tenth, even so is the attainment of Brahman. If Brahman was something apart from us, that is, finite, one could speak about it in terms of relativity, its being attainable

or otherwise. As it is Infinite, it is always attained already. It is closer to us than our own ego. We find it in ourselves when disillusioned by one who understands the situation like unto the case above illustrated.

SCIENCE comes to fulfill and not to destroy. Those who regard with dismay the crumbling down of their favourite idols before its unsparing onslaught are blind indeed. We must exult at the thought that the actualities of science are higher, nobler and more inspiring than the dreams of superstition even if they were plausible. Let the weak and weakening go, it is the strong that endure. Truth never perishes.

THE tendency of modern science is undoubtedly towards the higher Hindu thought. The following from a recently published scientific work is in point: "Matter is fundamentally homogeneous. There is one force in the universe, though its varying rates of vibration lead to infinite physical manifestations, that there is a structural unity based upon a common prototypal form, and lastly, that all consciousness is 'linked and bound together in an all embracing whole whose myriad aspects serve to mark the path of evolution,' and that through the whole realm of universe only one life pulsates and stirs. In short, 'there is but one substance, one Force, one Consciousness and one Life and that each of these is but the varying aspect of the one Reality behind.' With this form of thought we are not unacquainted. The scientific results of these days tend to make us realise that the universe is only a manifestation of His being"